

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-56 are presently active in the present application. Claims 29-42 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by the present amendment. Claims 1, 4-5, 7-11, 13-15, 18-19, 21-25, 27-28, 43, 46-47, 49-53, and 55-56 have been amended by the present amendment. Support for the amendments can be found in the specification as originally filed. Thus no new matter has been added to this application.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 29-42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C §101 as non-statutory; and Claims 1-56 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikegami (U.S. Pat. No. 6,745,334) in view of Kizaki (U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2002/0030853).

Addressing now the rejection of Claims 29-42 under 35 U.S.C. §101 as non-statutory, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 29-42 have been canceled by the present response without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of these claims is moot.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 29-42 under 35 U.S.C. §101 be withdrawn.

Addressing now the rejection of Claims 1-28 and 43-56 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Ikegami in view of Kizaki, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 15, as amended, recites,

A method used for mapping an application to a function key in an image forming apparatus that can include a plurality of applications, the method comprising:
displaying a screen used for selecting an application on an operation display part of the image forming apparatus; and
mapping a selected application that is selected on the screen to a function key when the function key is pushed, such that the selected application is executed when the function key is later pushed after mapping of the selected application has occurred;

wherein the function key is a key used for a user to select and execute an application from a plurality of applications that are useable on the image forming apparatus.

Claim 1 recites a corresponding apparatus claim. Claim 43 recites a corresponding computer readable medium claim.

Ikegami describes an image forming apparatus and method of controlling the same where personal box areas are allocated to respective individuals in image memory.

However, Ikegami does not recite mapping a selected application that is selected on the screen to a function key when the function key is pushed for the selected application. Further, Ikegami does not describe that the function key is a key used for a user to select and execute an application from a plurality of applications that are useable on the image forming apparatus.

Regarding the mapping a selected application that is selected on the screen as recited in Claim 15, the outstanding Office Action asserts on page 4 that Ikegami describes the features of the claimed invention. However, Applicants respectfully traverse this assertion.

Specifically, Ikegami describes Figure 6 as showing an example of a screen for setting the copying mode in the image forming apparatus. When the key is touched the corresponding *mode* is set. However, Ikegami does not describe mapping a selected application that is selected on the screen to a function key when the function key is pushed for the selected application.

In contrast, Claim 15 recites mapping a selected application that is selected on the screen to a function key when the function key is pushed for the selected application. Further, Claim 15 clarifies that the function key is a key used for a user to select and execute an application from a plurality of applications that are useable on the image forming apparatus. As described in pages 4 and 5 of the specification, prior to the claimed invention, users may have selected unusable function keys when attempting to map applications to

specific function keys. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Ikegami fails to teach or suggest the mapping element of Claim 15.

Kizaki describes an image data storing device with a limit check procedure that compares a capacity necessary for storing designated image files to be transferred and the residential memory capacity of a destination to which the image files should be transferred. However, Kizaki does not recite mapping a selected application that is selected on the screen to a function key when the function key is pushed for the selected application. Further, Kizaki does not describe that the function key is a key used for a user to select and execute an application from a plurality of applications that are useable on the image forming apparatus.

Regarding the mapping a selected application that is selected on the screen as recited in Claim 15, the outstanding Office Action asserts on page 4 that Kizaki describes the features of the claimed invention. However, Applicants respectfully traverse this assertion.

Specifically, Kizaki describes the copy server key is used to store document images read by a scanner or image output from a host computer or to print stored images. Kizaki further describes the document key is used to edit image data stored by the above copy server function. However, Kizaki does not describe mapping a selected application that is selected on the screen to a function key when the function key is pushed for the selected application.

In contrast, Claim 15 recites mapping a selected application that is selected on the screen to a function key when the function key is pushed for the selected application. Further, Claim 15 clarifies that the function key is a key used for a user to select and execute an application from a plurality of applications that are useable on the image forming apparatus. According to Claim 15, a displaying displays a screen used for selecting an application on an operation display part of the image forming apparatus. The user can map a selected application that is selected on the screen to a function key when the function key is

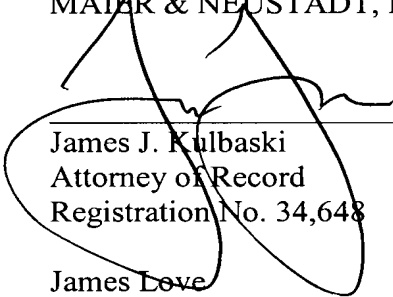
pushed for the selected application, as shown in Figures 5-9 in the outstanding application. Since the application selected on the screen is mapped to a function key that is actually pushed, the problem in that the application may be mapped to a function key that is unusable is overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Kizaki fails to teach or suggest the mapping element of Claim 15.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 15, and 43 and the claims depending therefrom, patentably distinguish over Ikegami and Kizaki. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1, 15, and 43 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendments, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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